
Save Glen Oakes

The Fremont Open Space Advisory

Residents of Fremont

What we thought was going to happen has come to pass. Because the town came up six votes shy of the 2/3 majority necessary to pass the Open Space bond proposal, Fremont is now in jeopardy of losing one of the most important tracts of open land in town. If this land is developed, not only will we be losing this huge piece of land, we will also risk the health of Spruce Swamp, the primary source of our drinking water. Additionally, the increase in taxes that will be realized because of the additional services required for these new developments will be significant. The bulldozers are at the doorstep but **it's not too late to act.**

The Glen Oakes Project

The Town of Fremont has the opportunity to protect a 338-acre tract of land bordering Spruce Swamp. The land known as Glen Oakes is a vast tract of managed forest and lowlands that lies between Copp Drive, Andreski Drive and Gristmill Road. Owned by the Lawrence family, it includes forested uplands that provide habitat for animals, recreation for town residents and a primary tool to replenish Spruce Swamp. 2/3rds of this land is developable and will add an estimated 75 new houses in Fremont.

The Financial Case for Conserving Glen Oakes

Conventional wisdom dictates that when there are more houses and more people, tax burden is spread and overall taxes are lower. **In fact, the opposite is true.** Why? The greater the population, the greater the demand for public services. Generally, if there is a school aged child in a home, the need for public services demanded by the house far outweigh the property taxes generated by that home. **75 new houses built in Glen Oakes will cause your taxes to rise.**

Protecting Natural Resources

Development does more than threaten the quality and rural character of our community. Increased housing also threatens Fremont's precious aquifers. The Spruce Swamp has been designated as a **Prime Wetlands** area by the town but the long term goal is to create a large buffer of protected land around the swamp. Protecting Glen Oakes is one of the main steps in the long term plan to secure the future viability of Fremont's water supply. **This water supply directly impacts your future and the future of this town.**

The Project Plan

The Glen Oakes property was under negotiation with a developer when The Fremont Conservation Commission, The Open Space Advisory and The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF) began discussions. The Forest Society, a statewide nonprofit conservation group, has negotiated an option agreement with the landowner that requires a \$45,000 payment in order to hold the property until Fremont can pass an open space bond issue at next year's town meeting. From July 30th, the town will have 18 months to pass a bond measure. If the town is unable to purchase the land in that time period, the option will expire. The land will be sold and developed.

Our Plan for this Land

The Town of Fremont will use a bond issue to purchase 313 acres of land along with a conservation easement over an additional 25 acres. The town will manage most of the land for sustainable forestry, generating some income for the town. The property would be open for public use as a permanent open space resource for the town.

We Need Your Help

The Fremont Open Space Advisory must raise \$45,000 as an option payment to preserve the opportunity to conserve this land. The Conservation Commission and the Forest Society have already agreed to make contributions of \$15,000 each. Now we must raise \$15,000 from town residents and businesses. This money is **not** a donation. It is a loan that will be used to purchase the option. Fremont residents then need to vote to pass an open space bond so that the land can be permanently saved. After that is done, your pledge money will be returned to you. There **is** risk but there is also reward. Raising \$15,000 is the essential first step in the process.

Glen Oakes Option Q. and A.

What is Glen Oakes?

Glen Oakes is a key 338 acre parcel of wooded land located on the southeast edge of Spruce Swamp. This land is essential to the protection of Spruce Swamp and has been earmarked by The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF) and the Fremont Conservation Commission as a top priority.

What is an Option, an option to do what?

An option is an agreement that reserves the opportunity to buy land at a later date. This option would hold Glen Oakes for the town until March when residents will have a chance to vote to save it as part of the open space bond proposal.

Why is the option needed?

The current owners of the property have done everything they can to preserve this piece of land but they now need to sell the property. Although they had reached an agreement with a developer who was willing to give them more than the assessed value of the land, they are willing to accept less if the land can be preserved. This option will hold the land for the town until passage of a bond so that the purchase can take place.

Where will the money come from?

A total of \$45,000 is necessary to secure an option on the Glen Oakes property. The money will come from the following sources:

Fremont Conservation Commission	\$15,000
Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests	\$15,000
Private Donations	\$15,000

How does this option work?

If the entire \$45,000 is raised, The Fremont Conservation Commission in conjunction with SPNHF will give this money to the Lawrence family. This payment will put a hold on the sale of the Glen Oakes property until next year's town meeting. At that time the Fremont Open Space Advisory will ask the town to pass a bond that will provide the town with an opportunity to purchase the land.

What will happen to the pledge money if the bond is passed?

If the bond is passed, people who have given money for the option can have that money returned to them. They also have the option of making that money a permanent tax deductible gift to the Fremont Conservation Commission.

What happens if the bond does not pass next year?

In the event that the bond does not pass next year, the option money will be kept by the Lawrence family and they will be free to pursue other options.

What will be the final purchase price of the land?

The final price will be determined after a revised assessment is completed by a professional appraisal company. The final price that the town will pay will be less than this assessment.

What will happen if the bond passes?

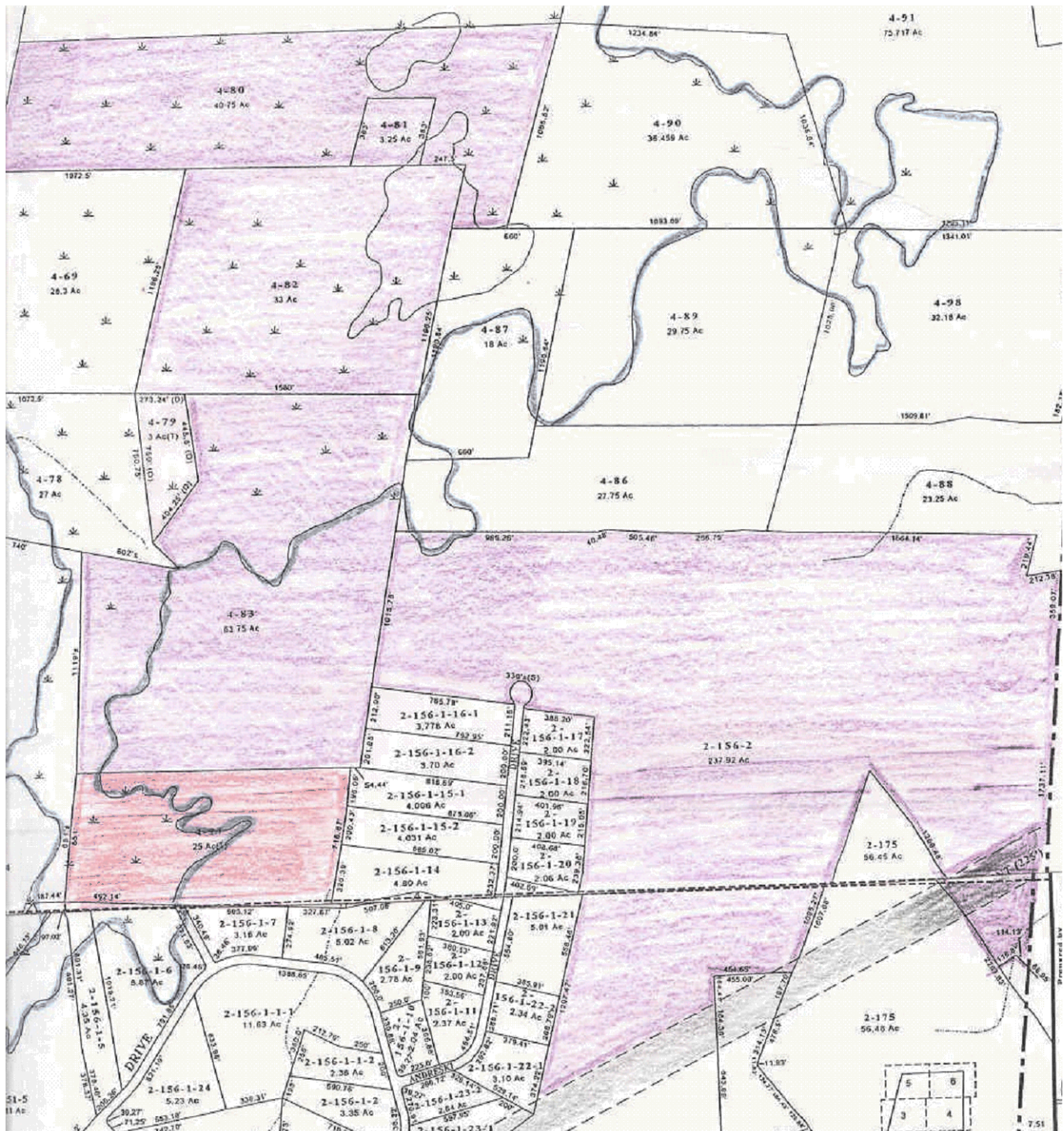
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Won't buying this land take money from the tax base?

Saving this land will actually benefit Fremont financially. Because Glen Oakes has been managed as a tree farm, the owners paid a really low tax rate (a little over \$1,000 per year). If the town is able to manage the land, that small amount of money will be recouped through sustainable forestry practices.

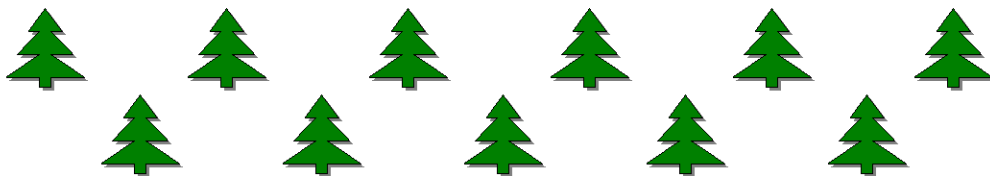
Glen Oaks

The owners of the Glen Oaks property, the Lawrence family, have invited the public to come out to the property to see how special this land is. To get to Glen Oaks from Ellis School take Main Street (rte 107) to Copp Drive. Then take a left onto Andreski Drive and enter the Glen Oaks property from the end of Andreski Drive. There are many paths to explore on the property. Seeing is believing.



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